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History of the First Friends  
church



*Keep for future Reference.*

# HISTORY

OF THE

## First Friends Church

Brown Street

Between Washington and Adams Streets

Knightstown, Indiana

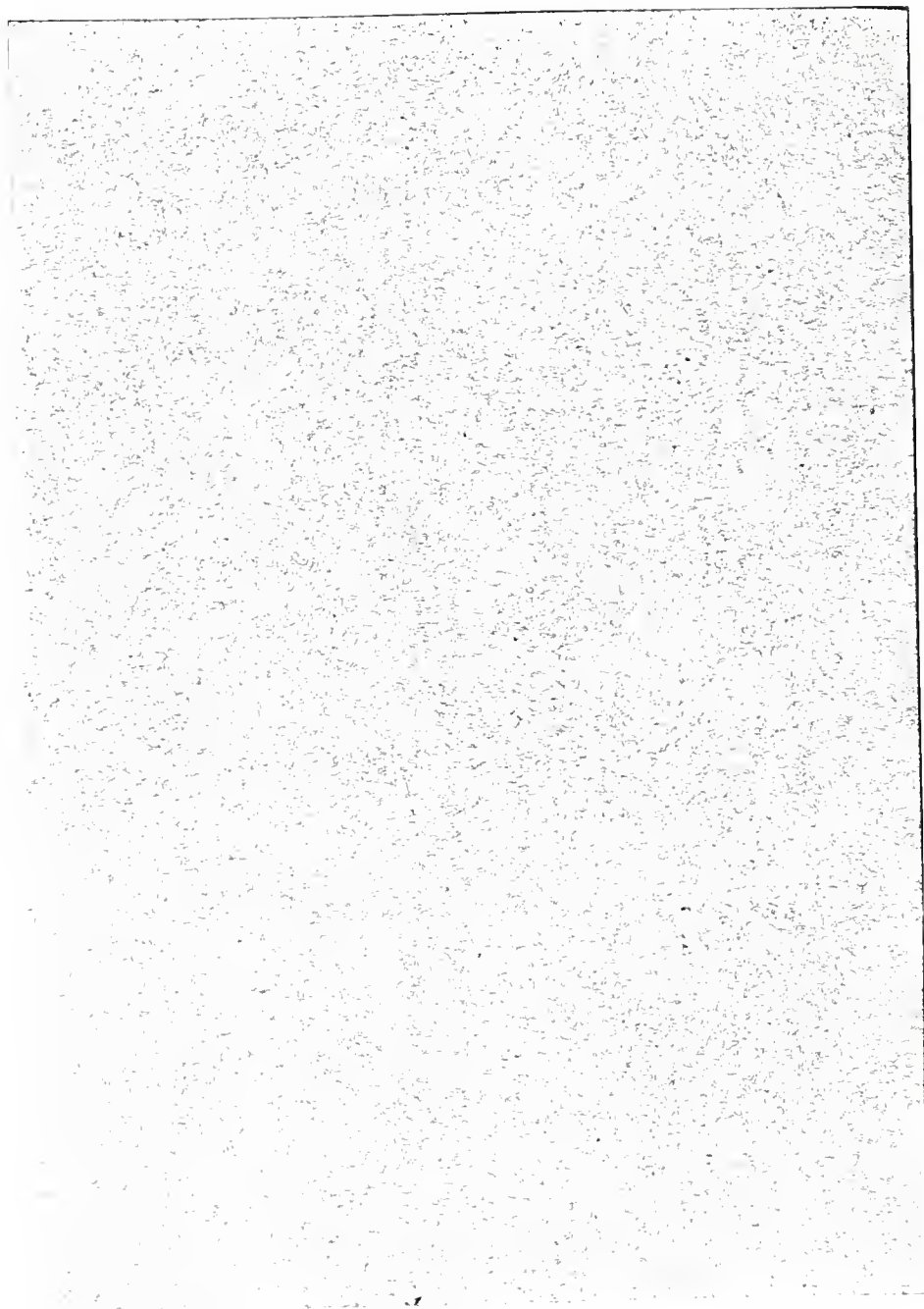
1876 — 1911

*Monthly Meeting of Friends.*

*together with Rayville Monthly Meeting*

*Records from Knightstown*

THE GORDON LITHOGRAPH, BOSTON, U.S.A.



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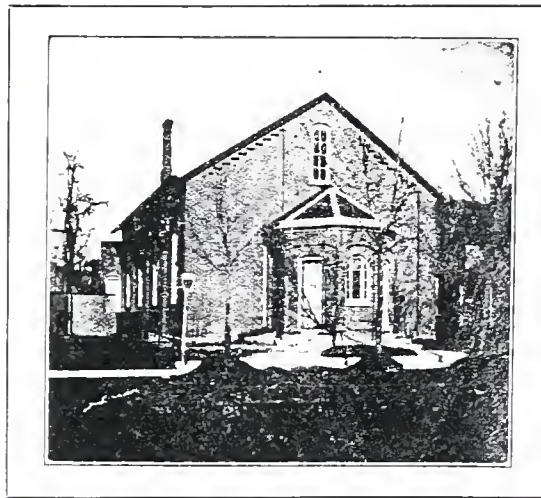
1876 — 1911

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“Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”—St. John, 15th chapter, 15th verse.

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### OUR CHURCH

Brown Street, between Washington and Adams Streets

Furnished in modern style with art glass windows,  
lighted with electric lights, and heated  
by furnace

“Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” 1st Corinthians, 12th chapter, 3rd verse.



OUR PASTOR  
ESTHER COOK

**ESTHER COOK**, daughter of Jesse and Abigail Stafford Cook, was born and reared near Greensboro, Indiana. She comes of a long line of Quaker ancestry, and had a birthright in Duck Creek Monthly Meeting, Spiceland Quarterly Meeting of Friends.

Her education was obtained in the common schools of Henry County, high school of New Castle and Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana.

She was recorded a minister by New Castle Monthly Meeting in 1890, and for twenty years she has faithfully labored in evangelistic work within the limits of Indiana, Western and Wilmington Yearly Meetings.

By appointment of Indiana Yearly Meeting she attended the opening of Puget Sound Quarterly Meeting, opened and held at Seattle, Washington, September, 10th to 12th, 1907. A second visit to this field was in response to a call from the Evangelistic and Church Extension Boards of the Five Years Meeting and Indiana Yearly Meeting. This service covered a period of eleven months in the states of Washington, Oregon and California.

She served many years on the Bible Institute Board of Indiana, Western and Wilmington Yearly Meetings, and is a member of the Peace Committee of Indiana Yearly Meeting.

She accepted a call to the pastorate of Knightstown Meeting October 23, 1910.

## CHARTER MEMBERS of Knightstown Meeting 1876

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The Knightstown Preparative Meeting of Friends was opened 4th month 20th, 1876, with 46 charter members, whose names are as follows:

Dr. Wilson Hobbs	David W. Douglas
Zalinda Lynch Hobbs	Lydia M. Douglas
Orville W. Hobbs	Ithamer W. Stuart
Mary Z. (Hobbs) Davis	Margaret Stuart
Walton C. Hobbs	Laura A. (Stuart) Morrison
Charles M. Hobbs	John E. Keys
Fannie B. Hobbs	Sophia L. Keys
Robert W. Hobbs	Harry E. Keys
Harry L. Hobbs	James Beeman
Mary B. Charles	William Penn Beeman
Elizabeth Deem	Margaret L. (Beeman) Haines
Benajah Parker	Ruth Stratton
Deborah Ann Parker	Lemuel Murray
Allen T. Kirk	Abigail D. Murray
Lucinda E. Kirk	Tacy Shoemaker
Anna M. (Kirk) Sample	Albert W. Aiken
Catherine Morrison	Grace D. (Tatner) Aiken
William G. Edwards	Caleb M. Pelle
William Kearns	Maria Pelle
Elizabeth Kearns	Frank H. Pelle
Rebecca J. (Kearns) Midkiff	Walter Pelle
Nathan T. Coffin	Louisa Pelle
Jennie Coffin	Mary Frederick

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“One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”  
“One God and Father of all, who is above all,  
and through all, and in you all.”—Ephesians, 4th  
chapter, 5th and 6th verses.

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### WATCHWORD

“Ye are my Friends if ye do the things which I command  
you.”

### DECLARATION

“We believe in God the Father; we believe in God the Son  
and in God the Holy Spirit; everlasting three in One.”

### PRINCIPLES

Forgiveness of sins and the impartation of spiritual life  
through faith in the atonement on the Cross by our Lord and  
Saviour, Jesus Christ. Baptism with the Holy Spirit. Direct  
communion of the believer with the Father, through the Son by  
the Spirit.

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## History of Knightstown Meeting of Friends For the Past Thirty-Five Years

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The name of Dr. Wilson Hobbs is closely identified with the early history of the Friends Church in Knightstown, Ind. He moved here in July, 1873. He soon became convinced that there was enough of that faith to act as a nucleus around which to fashion a church. Early in the winter of 1873, shortly before the holidays, he called a meeting in his office. There were present at this meeting:—Dr. Wilson Hobbs, Mary B. Charles, Ithamer W. Stuart, Margaret Stuart, William G. Edwards, Catherine Morrison, Allen T. Kirk, Lucinda E. Kirk and John E. Keys, to talk over the advisability of establishing a Friends meeting in Knightstown. We felt Dr. Hobbs was led by the Spirit. We readily and cheerfully united our forces and for a few times met in his office for prayer and guidance. We found that other Christian denominations were interested in us and our mission and granted us the use of their churches for worship a few times.

We were united in asking Raysville Monthly Meeting for an indulged meeting, which was granted, and a room was immediately rented in the Reeves block early in 1874, now known as the G. A. R. Hall. Friends met on the first day of the week at 3:15 p. m., also on Fourth day evening at 7 p. m. for worship. William G. Edwards was appointed Elder and was recognized as the head of the meeting. Dr. Wilson Hobbs, Zalinda L. Hobbs, Catherine Morrison, Ithamer W. Stuart and Margaret Stuart also sat with him at the head of the meeting. All this number and also all our first elders and overseers, Clerk, Assistant Clerk and the Treasurer have since been called home to receive their reward. Their zeal and loyalty to Christ and the church, as we look back upon their lives, was simply grand. Yet all

was clothed in such simple acts of kindness, their good advice and words of encouragement given here and there, and when duty called them they seemed (to us) to go without effort. None but they know of the pleading with God for light and leading. The burdens laid upon their hearts for others, were quietly and dutifully performed and God blessed them. There are people here today, living in the light of God's love and blessings, who owe much to those faithful Friends for their good advice and wise counsel and sweet persuasion, whose memory we honor today. Let us take unto ourselves the great lessons from their lives and characters, and put them into practical use here in our church and community, and thereby be truer friends and purer Christians, doing with our might what our hands find to do in the uplifting and building of our church, that it may grow and become a shining light for God, and all that comes within her doors may find the sweet peace and rest that belongeth to the people of God. Let us be ready as they were when we hear the Master say, "It is enough; come up higher."

Only fourteen of the charter members of this meeting are now living, as far as we know. Eight of this number reside in Knightstown.

For a few months we were strengthened by the ministry of Mary H. Rogers. Later David W. Douglas of Maine came and remained with us until after the erection of the church building, proving helpful, both spiritually and temporally. A committee was appointed consisting of Dr. Wilson Hobbs, John E. Keys and William G. Edwards, to locate and secure a lot on which to erect a church building. The lot was bought and the present church was built during the summer and fall of 1875. John L. Morrison and Harvey Burt were added to the building committee. John E. Keys is now the only living member of the committee that built this house.

An extract was received at the Raysville Monthly Meeting 3rd month 25th, 1876, from the Spice Land Quarterly Meeting informing it that they united in granting the establishment of a preparative meeting at Knightstown, as requested by Raysville



Monthly Meeting and directed that the meeting be opened at the time for holding the meeting for worship and preparative meeting in 4th month 20th, 1876, at 7 p. m., which was at our regular prayer meeting on 5th day evening. This is the date of our organization and according to the monthly meeting record we are to be known as the "Knightstown Meeting of Friends."

The quarterly meeting appointed Seth Stafford, Caleb Johnson, James H. Henly, Jane Ratcliff, Mary Saint, Retina White, Francis W. Thomas, Rebecca Hiatt, Jason Williams, Rebecca Thomas and Mary H. Rogers to act in conjunction with a like committee appointed by Raysville Monthly Meeting to attend the opening, namely, William Haughton, Isaac Parker, Charles S. Hubbard, and Joseph Pritchard. They also proposed the names of Ithamer W. Stuart, Nathan T. Coffin, Lucinda E. Kirk and Elizabeth Kearns for overseers, with whom the monthly meeting united, held 4th month, 22nd, 1876, and they were accordingly appointed to that station, with William G. Edwards as clerk, Jennie Coffin, assistant, and Allen T. Kirk as treasurer of the preparative meeting. At this time we had a membership of 46, twelve of whom were under 21 years of age. We all were members of Raysville Monthly Meeting prior to the establishment of Knightstown Preparative Meeting, 35 years ago. At the opening of our preparative meeting the time for worship was changed for holding our First day meeting from 8:15 p. m. to 10:30 a. m. Our First day evening meeting was first held 11th month, 1877. This is not a recorded meeting.

In 4th month 23rd, 1876, our church was dedicated by the late David B. Updegraff, assisted by John Henry Douglas and David W. Douglas. At the monthly meeting held 5th month 26th, 1877, a committee was appointed to revise the list of elders. They appointed William G. Edwards and Margaret Stuart as elders for Knightstown Preparative Meeting. These were our first elders.

The early members of this meeting have passed through some very dark and trying times. After our meeting house was dedicated there was a shrinkage on our subscription list

on account of the panic of 1876, causing an indebtedness on the church building. Ithamer W. Stuart and Lemuel Murray, members of this meeting, borrowed the money from the bank for the full amount of this indebtedness at 11 per cent interest. Our meeting, to make them secure, deeded them the church property. Our membership at that time was poor and few in number and not able to pay the interest which had accumulated until the total amount of interest and principal was fifteen hundred dollars. Mr. Stuart and Mr. Murray became uneasy. Then a Catholic priest came to them and offered to buy our church building. It seemed to them this was the only way to pay off the note in the bank. This was a gloomy hour for the Knightstown meeting, when the clouds were so dark and heavy that we could scarcely believe they had a silver lining. Sometimes we think the present generation would sink under such burdens. But God in His infinite love and because of our faith, turned the clouds into brightest sunshine, and the church grew in grace and in knowledge of the Master, and today we stand as it were, shoulder to shoulder with the churches of our town.

Raysville Monthly Meeting held 1st month 27th, 1877, gave our meeting the first ray of hope, by authorizing Isaac Parker and Samuel Pritchard, trustees of Raysville Monthly Meeting, to sell the old "Elm Grove" meeting house and grounds, "as that meeting had been laid down by the sanction of the quarterly meeting," and the monthly meeting proposed to use the proceeds toward relieving the indebtedness incurred by Friends of Knightstown in building their meeting house, which is within the limits of Raysville Monthly Meeting.

At Raysville Monthly Meeting, held 11th month 24th, 1877, the trustees reported that they had sold the Elm Grove meeting house for two hundred and fifty dollars and appropriated the funds as directed.

John E. Keys asked for thirty days time to see if the rest of the money could be raised. He visited White Water Quarterly Meeting held at Richmond, Indiana, and met with some en-

couragement, also at Walnut Ridge and Carthage meetings, thereby cutting down the indebtedness to nearly nine hundred dollars. He also visited our own quarterly meeting at Spiceland on Seventh day, where he made a statement of our financial difficulties. Amos M. Kenworthy, then of Westfield, Ind., arose and said, "Let the meeting proceed with the business. I will pay off the indebtedness of Knightstown meeting myself. No Catholic priest can buy the Knightstown Friends Church, for there is a place in Knightstown for a Friends meeting." On the following 2nd day Amos M. Kenworthy came to Knightstown and arranged with the bank and Lemuel Murray and Ithamer W. Stuart to pay off the remainder of the indebtedness, which then amounted to a little over nine hundred dollars. Amos returned to Hamilton County, sold his home, and came back and paid off the debt on our church. By unanimous consent of the members of our meeting, we deeded Amos all of the ground lying east of the church building, with the exception of two feet. This was all our meeting had to give in return for his generous gift to us. We feel our church owes a debt of gratitude to Amos M. Kenworthy that we never can repay, for he made darkness light before us and crooked things straight. The Lord, in a miraculous way, provided the means for Amos to build him a cottage home on the ground our meeting gave him. He served for a time as our pastor. New hope and life came to the little Knightstown meeting under his ministry, assisted by his Christian wife, Phebe H. Kenworthy. During the revival of 1881, held by him, there were 30 persons were added to our membership. A real spiritual uplift came to us all.

Amy Fulghum, who was much beloved, accepted a call to serve as our pastor during 1884. She held a revival early in the year of 1886, assisted by Emma S. Garritson. This revival was much noted for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. During this revival 67 members were added to our church at the monthly meeting held 2nd month 27th, 1886. In all, 91 members were added to Knightstown meeting during that year. Emma S. Garritson remained here and assisted Amy Fulghum in the

pastoral work of our meeting until 5th month of 1887.

Joseph O. Binford, beloved by all our membership, came on call to serve as our pastor, 1st month, 1893. He soon opened a series of revival meetings, assisted by John Pennington. Thirty-three members were added to this meeting. During the same year seventy-five members were added to our church. These have been the three marked periods of revivals in the history of our Knightstown meeting of Friends, when God's Spirit came upon the church with such wonderful power. Many who have joined our meeting during these three noted revivals are active members and doing much good for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, while many of this number are now on the other shore, whose memory we still revere for their untiring efforts to assist in building up the cause of Christ.

While our church has not increased so much in numbers during any revival or year since the above dates, yet there has been a steady growth, both spiritually and temporally. Our meeting has been blessed with excellent ministers from its earliest organization to the present time. While some have not been as successful as others in gathering into the church yet they have sown good seed and others have done the reaping, yet all have done the best they could and none have been failures, and many of these pastors whose wise counsel and pastoral care will never be forgotten.

Samuel C. Mills is the only minister who died while pastor of this meeting. His work among us was satisfactory.

The names of all ministers who have served as pastors of Knightstown meeting are as follows: Mary H. Rogers, David W. Douglas, Henry Merrill, Amos M. Kenworthy, Seth C. Rees, Amy Fulghum, Emma S. Garrison, Alfred Brown, Joseph O. Binford, Samuel C. Mills, Minnie Bassett, Morton C. Pearson, Elbert Russell, Oscar Moon, S. Adelbert Wood, Levi T. Pennington, Frank B. Rhodes and Esther Cook, our present pastor, beloved by us all and who is doing much good for the upbuilding of the cause of Christ.

Our Bible School was first organized in the spring of 1874

Pastors and their time of  
Service for Knightstown Par-  
ticular Meeting of Friends=  
Continuation of names in  
rotation from those printed  
in the small Membership  
Record, 3<sup>rd</sup> Month 1901,

Rev. Morton C. Pearson  
was Pastor from 10<sup>th</sup> Month  
1<sup>st</sup> 1900, to, 6<sup>th</sup> Month 1903.

Rev. Elbert Russell  
supply, from 6<sup>th</sup> Month  
1903, to, 10<sup>th</sup> Month 1903,

Rev. Oscar Moon from  
10<sup>th</sup> Month 4<sup>th</sup> 1903, to  
9<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1905,

pastoral work of our

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Samuel C. of this meeting

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beloved by us an ing of the cause of Christ.

Our Bible School was first organized in the spring of 1874

Rev, S. Adelbert Wood from  
10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1905 to,  
10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1906

Rev, Levi Pennington  
from 10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1907,  
to, 10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1909.

Rev, Frank B. Rhoads  
from 10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1909  
to 9<sup>th</sup> Month 1910.

Esther Cook from 10<sup>th</sup>  
Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1910 to, 10<sup>th</sup>  
Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1914.

Rev, Willis Bond from  
10<sup>th</sup> Month 1<sup>st</sup> 1914, to  
9<sup>th</sup> Month 1916.

om Rev, Zeno H. Sloan from  
9<sup>th</sup> Month 1916 to the  
present-time and is still  
Pastor of this Meeting  
who is loved by us all  
and who is doing much  
good for the upbuilding  
of the cause of Christ-

Respectfully  
Sophia L. Keys = Recorder  
of Knightstown Particular  
Meeting of Friends,  
Knightstown, Ind.  
9<sup>th</sup> Month 14<sup>th</sup> 1918.

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Samuel C. Mil  
of this meeting

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Amy Fulghum, El  
Binford, Samuel C  
Elbert Russell, O  
nington, Frank B.  
beloved by us all a  
ing of the cause of

Our Bible School was first organized in the spring of 1874



in the G. A. R. Hall, while we were yet an indulged meeting, with William G. Edwards as superintendent. There were two classes organized, with Mary Z. Hobbs Davis and John E. Keys as teachers. Attendance, 21. The monthly meeting record shows that in 9th month 23rd, 1876, we had an average of about one hundred scholars.

Our Young People's Christian Endeavor was organized in 4th month 10th, 1889, with a membership of 25.

The Junior and Intermediate C. E. Society was organized 11th month 6th, 1892, with 15 members.

Our Home and Foreign Missionary Societies are well organized and doing excellent work.

Our Ladies Aid Society was organized August, 1907, with a membership of 38. Since then they have earned more than \$600.00. They have recarpeted and repapered the church and put in new "art glass" windows, and paid \$25 each year to the pastoral fund, also assisted the church financially otherwise, and now have nearly \$50 in the treasury. Their work is highly appreciated by the entire membership.

Our church has always been blessed with a well organized and efficient choir. The faithfulness of our young people is praiseworthy and appreciated by the entire meeting.

During the first twenty-five years of the organization of Knightstown meeting we have lost by death fifty nine members. During the past ten years our loss by death is 56 members, making a total loss of 115 who have died while members of this meeting, since the organization thirty-five years ago. Many of this number's memory will ever be sweet for their beautiful lives and Christian influence. We now have a membership of 285.

Raysville Monthly Meeting of Friends was opened and held at Ray-ville meeting house, Henry County, Indiana, on the 25th day of 4th month, 1857, agreeably to an extract from Spiceland Quarterly Meeting of Friends held 3rd month 14th, 1857.

The name of Raysville Monthly Meeting was changed to that of Knightstown Monthly Meeting in 5th month 25th, 1895, which

is now held at Knightstown instead of Raysville as formally. It is held on the 4th Seventh day of each month and consists of five different particular or local business meetings, namely:—Raysville, Grant, Knightstown, Wilkinson and Shirley. The name of Knightstown Preparative Meeting (under the new discipline) was changed to that of Local Business Meeting in ~~1st month~~, 23rd, 1902. *12<sup>th</sup> mo, 28 = 1901.*

Knightstown Monthly Meeting of Friends is tributary to Spiceland Quarterly Meeting which was organized in 3rd month, 1840, which was held at Spiceland, Indiana.

Spiceland Quarterly Meeting is tributary to Indiana Yearly Meeting which is held at Richmond, Indiana, and was organized in 9th month, 1820. This is the largest Yearly Meeting of Friends in the world.

Let us all be faithful unto the end of life's journey and God will give us a crown of life.

Respectfully submitted,

SOPHIA L. KEYS.

Recorder of Knightstown Meeting of Friends.

*4th month 23rd, 1911.*

P. S.—The above history was prepared and read by Sophia L. Keys at the service of the 35th anniversary in commemoration of the organization of Knightstown Meeting of Friends, Fourth month 23rd, 1911.

Seth Stafford was present at this meeting and said he wanted to put his seal to the truthfulness of this history.—S. L. K.

# 1876—RETROSPECT—1911

By DR. T. R. WOODARD

## I

Upon this anniversary date  
We gather here to celebrate,  
In simple yet appropriate way,  
The church's dedication day.  
We're all agreed with one consent  
That this should be a glad event:  
A time with joyous hearts to raise  
Our grateful voices in His praise,  
Who planted here a fruitful vine  
And blesses every fruitful sign.

## II

To all who here their presence lend  
The hand of welcome we extend.  
And trust that all may truly sip  
The nectar of sweet fellowship.

## III

Reviewing now with joy and tears  
The lapse of five and thirty years  
Of earnest toil, there comes a sense  
Of overruling Providence.  
His hand that set His people free  
And led them through the raging sea,  
That rescued them from sore distress  
And led them through the wilderness,  
Has made His people at this place

The object of His sovereign grace.  
His Spirit prompted those who toiled  
With purpose that could not be foiled,  
To found a Friends church here to be  
A light in this community.  
No pillared cloud marked out the way,  
But Faith said, "Trust Him and obey."  
Let His wise purpose be fulfilled  
By all who will arise and build.  
And barriers vanished one by one  
Like mists before the rising sun.

IV

All honor to those faith-filled Friends  
The fragrance of whose influence lends  
A sweetness to *these* passing hours  
Like air perfumed by unseen flowers.  
'Twas their work to originate,  
Our duty to perpetuate  
The blessings to a future age  
Of this our "goodly heritage."  
For their work's sake we truly deem  
Them worthy of our high esteem.  
This *building* represents the price  
Of many a willing sacrifice;  
Of toil by day and prayers by night,  
And rare gifts like the "widow's mite,"  
Which *loyalty* and *love* reveal,  
As larger gifts *may* greed conceal.  
Long may it stand an evidence  
Of faith's enduring recompense.

V

It is not strange that times like these  
Should call for sacred reveries.

And memory see before it cast  
A panorama of the past.  
Across the landscape of the years  
Like flying clouds each scene appears,  
Then vanishes e'en while we muse  
As one would shift dissolving views.  
How many pastors here have stood,  
And sought to do their people good,  
As shepherds faithful vigil keep  
In caring for each straying sheep.  
With living water from the rock  
They've watered here the thirsty flock,  
And often with the living bread,  
The multitudes have here been fed.  
As round this altar we have knelt  
His Spirit's presence we have felt,  
His matchless mercies multiplied  
To sinful hearts were not denied,  
But here they've found their doubts and fears  
Dissolved by penitential tears.  
And Christ from guilt has given release  
Its token—His abiding peace.  
And shown how His unmeasured grace  
Clasps the whole world in its embrace.

VI

Like discords in some sweet refrain  
Life has its pleasure marred by pain.  
While here we mingle and reflect  
Upon a pleasing retrospect.  
A sadness steals into our hearts  
As night comes when the day departs.  
How many with us here have met  
Whose faces we can ne'er forget.  
The thought of friends whom we have known,  
And dear ones fondly claimed *our own*.

Recalls our pangs of deepest grief,  
For which earth has no sure relief,  
When on our ears from other shores  
We hear the dip of splashing oars,  
When loved ones drop their house of clay  
And from our grasp just slip away.  
Here 'round the caskets flower-bedecked—  
Our last sweet tokens of respect—  
We've thought of death's great mystery  
And mingled tears of sympathy.  
But hope has looked beyond the tomb  
And faith dispelled its deepest gloom.

VII

Like streams that from a fountain run  
The church's work is never done.  
Remembrance of the former things  
A holy inspiration brings,  
To make this church by faith sublime  
A light-house on the shores of time.  
He, who our purpose understands  
Dwells not in temples made with hands,  
But seeks to make each heart by grace  
Fit temple for His dwelling place.  
And asks each one to pay the price  
Of new and living sacrifice,  
That this may be in a living way  
A true church *dedication day*.







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